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COMMUNICATIONS

RECOLLECTIONS OF CHIEF MAY-ZHUC-KE-GE-SHIG

The brief account of Chief May-zhuc-ke-ge-shig in your December issue recalls the pleasant vacations that for some years I spent on the White Earth Reservation. I there met many Indians of the Chippewa tribe, for the most part of mixed blood, some of whom were well educated and accustomed to the conveniences and some of the luxuries of our twentieth century civilization. I remember with particular pleasure John W. Carl (a nephew of the old chief whose passing you record) and his charming wife. Mr. Carl was then residing in Mahanomen, Minnesota, where he held the office of county auditor. Educated for the bar, he never practiced so far as I know. He retained complete mastery of his native Chippewa, and it was through him that I met and talked with May-zhuc-ke-ge-shig. The Chief may have known a little English, but, Indian-like, he gave no evidence that he understood a word that I said. However, thanks to the skilful interpreting of Mr. Carl, the interviews were entirely satisfactory to me.

His nephew told me that the Chief had known personally every president of the United States from Lincoln to Roosevelt. He quite frequently went to Washington on behalf of his people, and more than one president called him into conference on matters relating to Indian affairs. His moderation, good judgment, and friendliness to the whites were recognized by the federal officials. On some of these trips to the Nation's capital he was accompanied by Mr. Carl, who acted as interpreter. The old Chief always made a deep impression wheresoever he went. On several occasions he attended the theater, attracting more attention than any of the political notabilities.

And small wonder, in such a setting; even in old age he was the finest specimen of his race that it has been my good fortune to encounter. Fully six feet in height, he was of large frame and as straight as an arrow. His noble head was a study worthy of a master's brush. When I first met him he wore a neat frock coat, flannel shirt, moccasins, and black felt hat. In much the same garb

he undoubtedly appeared in Washington in later life. President Roosevelt, especially, took a great fancy to him.

The Chief, so Mr. Carl told me, possessed in a degree remarkable even in an Indian the power of oratory; and this gift was exercised more than once to quiet the restlessness of the tribesmen. He was the white man's friend and his memory should be suitably honored.

I like the photograph of May-zhuc-ke-ge-shig which I presented to the Society some years ago better than the one you have reproduced in your December issue.

JOHN THOMAS LEE

Chicago

GENERAL PORTER AND GENERAL PARKER

In the article entitled "General Grant and Early Galena" in the September, 1919 issue of the *WISCONSIN MAGAZINE OF HISTORY* occurs an error which should not go uncorrected. I refer to Mr. Evans' statement that among the friends of Grant at Galena prior to the Civil War was "Colonel Porter, a West Point man, then superintending the erection of a postoffice at Galena"; and, further on, the statement that Porter, "who was partly of Oneida Indian blood," served as an officer on General Grant's staff in the Civil War. It will certainly surprise the many friends of General Porter, and General Porter himself, to learn that he is of "Oneida Indian blood" or in any way of Indian descent.

The mistake has probably arisen by confusing the name of Porter with that of General Ely S. Parker, who served with Porter on Grant's staff. General Parker was Grant's military secretary during the later portion of the Civil War and in this capacity made the first engrossed copy of the terms of capitulation of General Lee at Appomattox. He was an Indian, a Seneca, the son of a chief, and himself the last grand sachem of the Iroquois Confederacy.¹ He received an excellent education in the schools of New York and having become a civil engineer was in the employ of the federal government for several years prior to the war. In 1857 he was sent to Galena to superintend the construction of a customs house and a marine hospi-

¹ A life of General Parker has recently been published as Vol. XXIII of the *Buffalo Historical Society Publications*.—Ed.